

M E R C A T O R:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, December 8. to Thursday, December 10. 1713.

*The Spanish Trade farther examined.**The Inability of the French, either to take off the Product of Spain, or supply them with Manufactures, proved.**If the French could have done it, why did they not during the late War?**Why were the Spaniards obliged to seek to us to open a Trade with them, even while the War lasted?**The Treaty of Commerce with Spain, now finished and Signed.**We shall now see what they can Object against it.**They who Slandered it before it was made, will not fail to throw Dirt at it after it is done.*

THE French Influence upon the Spanish Commerce, is now the Question in hand; Prohibitions or Impositions must be the Case, in which the French are to form the Advantages they must make, if they have any.

In Prohibitions, we have shewn already, that the Nature of the Thing does not admit of it; as far as those Prohibitions have been yet laid on: There can remain but one Objection, and that is, What farther Prohibitions the Spaniards may lay on? For example, they may Prohibit the English Woollen Manufactures, in favour of the French.

Let us give leave to these People to make the most absurd Suppositions in the World, for it is not only agreeable to their Honesty and Inclination, but the Necessity and Barrenness of their Argument requires it.

1. If the French can make Woollen Manufactures enough in Quantity to supply Spain, and make those Manufactures Better and Cheaper than the English, what need of a Prohibition? That very Case would be a Prohibition in the Nature of the Thing; for to have the Best and Cheapest Goods at Market, would be the best exclusive Article in the World against the English Trade: And how they are able to do this, will best appear, by examining the Quantities of English Goods Shipp'd every Day to Spain, notwithstanding the Neighbourhood of the French, and notwithstanding all that has been said of the Goodness and Cheapness of their Manufactures.

If it shall appear, that we Ship as great Quantities of Goods to Spain as ever, and greater in proportion: If it shall appear, that even in those Ports of Spain, which are nearest the French Manufactures, and to which they can bring their Goods for little or no expence of Freight, and where the great Market for Woollen Manufactures is kept:

If it shall appear, that even to these Ports we send as great Quantities of English Goods as ever, and that scarce a Piece of French Woollen Manufactures comes to Market, or if they did, would not be Sold there: If this appears, what shall we say to that Notion of the French carrying away the Spanish Trade from us, and

outdoing us in our own Manufacture. The Proof of these things shall come in its course.

As then, on the one Hand, if the French Goods were better than Ours and Cheaper, they would need no Prohibition; so, on the other Hand, if they are not fit for their Market, how shall they expect the Spaniards shall be Fools enough to put the Necessity upon themselves of buying those Goods, which are not for their Turn, and which are not fit for their Market, and shutting out those which are?

Add to this, that they must by Prohibiting the English Manufactures keep their own Native Produce of Wine, Oil, &c. at home, which, as before, none but the English can take off; and to Trade with the French for worse Goods, and such, as they know not what to do with, must, in the end, Ruine their own Country, and have no Vent for the Product of their Land.

This however is best explained from what has been, and Demonstration is an End of Argument in the Case.

We have had a War and Prohibition of Commerce with Spain for many Years: Let it be examin'd, How stood the Case with the Spaniards and the French all that Time? Could the French supply the Spaniards with Woollen Manufactures? If they did, How came the Town of Gibraltar to have such a Trade from hence as was never heard of before? And how came such a vast Export of English Goods to Portugal? Even more than in time of Peace used to go Portugal and Spain, put together. And how came, even the French themselves, to buy English Woollen Manufactures in Holland, to carry to the South-Seas, and that to a prodigious Value?

On the other Hand, Could the Spaniards put off their Wine, Oil, Wooll and Fruit to the French? Was not the contrary acknowledged by the Spaniards themselves? Was not Gibraltar Traded freely to by the English almost like a Neutral Port? where Contracts were made for the Wines of Alicante, Malaga and Cadiz, and the Fruit of Denia, Xevia, &c. the Oranges of Seville, and the Lemons of Malaga.

In a word, were not the Spaniards driven by the Necessity of their own Circumstances, as well for the

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Consumption of their own Produce, as for the Supply of their Markets with English Woollen Manufactures, which they could not be without, and which the French were not able to supply them with, to seek to us to Trade with them, and offer Passports to our Ships, that we might bring away their Wines, Oyls, Fruit, &c. Nay, did they not ask us Leave to come home to us to our own Doors, and bring their Goods, and buy our Manufactures?

Would they have done this, if the French could have either have taken off One, or have supplied them with the Other?

Whence then is all this Clamour at the French Trade Circumventing us in Spain, and Cutting us out in our Markets, and Influencing the Spaniards in the Markets of our Woollen Manufactures, to our Prejudice and Ruine?

If the French could have supplied them with Manufactures, would they not have done it in a Time of War, when they had an Opportunity to have all the Trade to themselves?

If the French could have taken off the Produce of Spain, would they not have striven to Convince the Spaniards of their being able to do so, at that time; and not have driven the Spaniards to the Necessity of Courting their Enemies, for such we were then, to come and Trade with them, as not having any Body to Trade with but the English, who could either take off their Goods, or supply them with such Manufactures as they wanted?

What was the Language of the Spaniards in this? Was it not thus! Pray Neighbour English-Merchants pray come and Trade with us again, and Buy our Sherry and Canary, our Mountain Mallaga's and deep Alicants, or we must throw them away, and dig up our Vineyards; and buy our Oil, our Raisins, Oranges, Limonds, Almonds, &c. or we know not what to do with them, for these French-men will take none of all these things; and pray bring us some English Bays, Broad-Cloth, Stuffs, Sayes, Perpets, Serges, Dozens, and Kerfies, and such like Goods as you used to bring, for the French can bring us nothing of a Quantity even of the Goods they pretend to have; and those they do bring are good for little, no way fit for our Markets; and if your Goods come in, we will have none of theirs.

If these are not their Words, these are exactly the Language of their Actions.

Nay, if we come to speak of their Wooll, the Case is the same: During this time of War, have the French been able, with all their mighty Manufacturing, which we speak so much of, and in so shameless a manner strive to magnify against our selves, and in Abatement of the Interest of our own Country; I say, Have the French been able to take it off of their Hands? Have not the Spaniards, as soon as ever they got Leave from their Court, brought it away to us? And is it rational to believe, they would have obtain'd that Leave from the Court at Madrid, if the French could have taken their Wooll off of their hands.

If this is the Case, what then shall we say to those People, who lay such a weight on that Argument, That the French will have all the Spanish Wooll from us? Of which more shall be said in our next.

It is plain, they might always have had as much of the Spanish Wooll as they pleased; it was ever as free for them as for us; and during this last War, they had had it all, if they had known, what to do with it. But alas! they are not able, tho' they have it, to make such Cloth with it as We do; but at the same time that they have the Spanish Wooll even cheaper than we, they being so near as to have it carried on Horseback to them, yet they buy Spanish Cloths of us, and in Holland, Flanders, and Spain it self, at second-hand, and pay 6 s. an Ell Duty for it to the King, letting the Spanish Wooll lie at Bilboa for us to fetch away, and the Spaniards to beg us to take it.

Is this the Nation, that are to supplant us in our Manufacture? Are these the People, that will have an Influence on our Trade in Spain, and will have the Spaniards Prohibit our Goods in Spain in Favour of their Manufactures? It is the most unaccountable thing in the World, that People should have the Face to talk thus in Trade; and nothing can be equally ridiculous, unless it be the Folly of those that believe them.

To Conclude this, the *MERCATOR* here presents the World with a brief Abstract of the Exportation of Woollen Manufactures to but one Port in Spain for a Month and odd Days; which Port in Spain is so near to France, that certainly if the French could supply any part of Spain upon cheap Terms, it would be this, the Carriage is so near; I mean the Port of Bilboa: And let any Man judge, whether it looks as if the French sent any Manufactures thither at all, or not.

From the CUSTOM-HOUSE.

English Woollen Manufactures Exported from London only, to Bilboa, from the 30th of October to the 6th of December, being one Month, and one Week.

Double Bays per piece	379
Minikin ditto	80
Perpets and Serges	1003
Stuffs	2281
Hose per dozen	1606
Woollen Cloths	107
Hats per dozen	29
Gartering per Groce	40

Exclusive of great Quantities of Tin, Pewter, wrought Brasses, wrought Iron, Calf-Skins, Copperas, and other English Goods.

Let this stand as a Mark upon the Spanish Trade, to tell the World, whether the French are like to work us out of it, or no.

It seems the People, who oppose this Paper, have made it a Maxim of their Conduct, to deny every thing the *MERCATOR* says, not because it is True or False, but because the *MERCATOR* says it; otherwise they could never resist the Reason of this, or justify the late slanderous Articles said to be demanded by the King of Spain in Prejudice of the English Commerce.

We have now a certain Account, that this Treaty of Commerce with Spain is actually signed and finished. Those, whose Business it apparently is to defame and decry every thing Her Majesty does, tho' with the sincerest Intent for Her Peoples Advantage; have attack'd this Treaty before it was finished: We shall now see their powerful Attacks on the Treaty it self. They, who could form Difficulties before-hand, and send Accounts from Holland of more Demands, than ever the Spaniard made, will not want Invention to throw Dirt at it, when done, let the Contexture of it be ever so good.

Errat. in the Last Mercator.

Col. 4. l. 14. for 1200 l. Ton of Shipping, r. 1200 Ton of Shipping.

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